



Pedro E. Segarra
Mayor

BUSHNELL PARK TO HOST HARTFORD SYMPHONY'S PICNIC IN THE PARK: A FREE CONCERT TO WELCOME NEW MUSIC DIRECTOR CAROLYN KUAN

---NEWS AND COMMUNITY STATEMENT---

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Outdoor Concert to Feature Classical, Jazz, Opera, Rock & Roll, Beatboxing, Marching Bands and More with Performances by Sirena Huang, Shodekeh, UCONN's "Pride of Connecticut" Marching Band, Yale Opera and Choirs from the Greater Hartford Arts Academy and Simsbury High School

HARTFORD, July 25, 2011 – The **Hartford Symphony Orchestra** will share their talent and passion for music with the community of Hartford at the **Hartford Symphony's Picnic In The Park** on Sunday, September 25, 2011 at 2:00 p.m. in Bushnell Park in downtown Hartford. Led by the HSO's new Music Director, **Carolyn Kuan**, this free, outdoor concert will showcase the many musical styles of the HSO, including classical works by Tchaikovsky, Beethoven and Shostakovich; an operatic selection featuring Yale Opera Program alumna Amanda Hall; a new arrangement from the HSO Jazz and Strings; solo beatboxing by Shodekeh and special guests; selections from the UCONN "Pride of Connecticut" marching band and drumline; a violin concerto performance by HSO Artist-in-Residence Sirena Huang; members of the choirs of the Greater Hartford Arts Academy and Simsbury High School, and more.

Carolyn Kuan says, "I'm inviting the entire community to come and enjoy my first concert with the HSO as Music Director. Hartford Symphony is a fantastic orchestra and this will be a blockbuster concert not to be missed. When has a 17 year old prodigy violinist, a beatboxing virtuoso, UCONN's "Pride of Connecticut Marching Band, the talented choirs of Simsbury High School and Greater Hartford Arts Academy, and more all come together in one performance? And what better way to enjoy a Sunday afternoon than to relax with family and friends and hear some great music in Bushnell Park?"

"We can't wait to share the passion and energy that Carolyn Kuan has for making music," says Hartford Symphony Interim CEO Carrie Hammond. "We thank Mayor Segarra and the City of Hartford for their support in presenting this free performance, and we hope to have a park full of people to welcome Carolyn to our community."

Mayor Pedro E. Segarra welcomes Maestra Kuan and applauds this community concert. "What

a great way to celebrate our parks, our history, our world renowned orchestra, and our city's bright future. Music is the international language and I can't think of a better way to bring people together. This sense of unity and collaboration is symbolic of what we're working towards with iQuilt—to knit together our arts and heritage with our open space and network our cultural pathways. The season is truly getting off on the right note!" said Mayor Segarra.

For this celebratory event, Maestra Kuan has assembled a program to showcase the great variety of programming offered by the HSO. The "Russian Dance" from Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker* will be followed by the most famous four notes in the history of music- the opening movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. The exciting, frenzied opening movement of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 9 will then lead into a freestyle "beatboxing" performance by Shedokeh, who also will be featured on an HSO Masterworks concert in January 2012. After a performance by HSO Jazz and Strings and an aria from Verdi's *La Traviata* as performed by rising star and alumna of the Yale Opera program Amanda Hall, the first half of the concert will close with the stunning virtuosic finale from Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto as performed by HSO artist in residence Sirena Huang.

After intermission, the UCONN marching band will get everyone up and on their feet with a boisterous marching cadence followed by John Williams' iconic *Olympic Fanfare*. The HSO will encourage the audience to "Come Together" for a Beatles Medley plus Khachaturian's "Sabre Dance" from *Gayane* and Strauss' vivacious *Radetzky March*. To close out the concert, the HSO and local high school choirs will perform Orff's epic "O Fortuna" from *Carmina Burana* followed by an uplifting sing-along of Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus." Carolyn Kuan says, "We have something for everyone - whether you like Beethoven and Tchaikovsky or jazz, beatboxing, or anything in between, this concert will be unforgettable."

HSO Music Director **Carolyn Kuan** is the 10th Music Director of the HSO and is the first woman to hold that position. Increasingly recognized as one of the most exciting, innovative, and outstanding conductors of her generation, past associations have seen Ms. Kuan as Associate Conductor of the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, Artist-in-Residence at the New York City Ballet, and Assistant Conductor for the Baltimore Opera Company. With explosive passion, impeccable technique and profound musical depth, her performances have included concerts with the Baltimore Symphony, Bournemouth Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Festival del Sole, Florida Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony, North Carolina Symphony, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Orquesta Sinfónica de Yucatán, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Toledo Symphony and San Francisco Symphony.

Hailed as the "first real virtuoso from the text-message generation" by the Hartford Courant, seventeen-year-old violinist **Sirena Huang** was the First Prize Gold Medalist of the prestigious International Tchaikovsky Competition for Young Musicians in June, 2009. Ms. Huang came to the HSO's rescue last season when a previously scheduled guest artist was detained in Europe due to the Icelandic volcanic ash crisis. She made her HSO debut in April 2009 with a performance of Bruch's First Violin Concerto under the direction of guest conductor Julian Kuerti. She will perform Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto with the HSO on the Masterworks Series in March 2012. Other major achievements include First Place at the Aspen Music Festival Violin Competition, First Prize in the "Remember Enescu" International Violin Competition, Third Prize in the Wieniawski International Competition, and Second Place in the triennial International Louis Spohr Competition, in which she became the youngest ever contestant and prize winner in that competition's history. Ms. Huang lives in South Windsor, CT and will be starting her senior year at the Loomis Chaffee School.

Shodekeh is a professional beatboxer currently living and working in the Baltimore, MD area and abroad. His rhythmic travels include collaborating with the worlds of hip hop, country, jazz, classical, and the visual arts through musical interpretations for exhibits at Baltimore Museum of Art, The American Visionary Arts Museum, and The Walter's Art Museum. With his vocals alone he can embody the sounds of not only trap set drums, but everything from turntables, congas, didgeridoos, and sleigh bells. He also fuses his vocals with the simultaneous instrumentation of pan flutes and harmonicas and has accompanied for a wide variety of dance techniques including Ballet, Fire Movement, and Belly Dancing.

CALENDAR LISTING:

HARTFORD SYMPHONY'S PICNIC IN THE PARK: *A Free Concert to Welcome New Music Director Carolyn Kuan*

With Carolyn Kuan, music director; Sirena Huang, violin and artist in residence; Amanda Hall, soprano; Shodekeh, beatboxer; Jason Pipitone, juggler; University of Connecticut "Pride of Connecticut" marching band; choirs from Greater Hartford Arts Academy and Simsbury High School

Sunday, September 25, 2011 | 2:00 p.m.

Bushnell Park, Hartford, CT

Program: Selections from Ludwig Van Beethoven: Symphony No. 5; Dmitri Shostakovich: Symphony No. 9; Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky: *The Nutcracker* and Violin Concerto; George Frederic Handel: "Hallelujah Chorus" from *The Messiah*; Carl Orff: *Carmina Burana*; John Williams: *Olympic Fanfare and Theme*; Paul McCartney/John Lennon: *Best of the Beatles*; Aram Khachaturian: "Sabre Dance" from *Gayane*; Johann Strauss, Sr.: *Radeztsky March*; plus beatboxing, jazz, opera, marching band, and more. Artists and repertoire are subject to change.

Ticket Information: FREE Admission

Additional Information: Free city street parking will be available around Bushnell Park. In the event of severe weather, the performance will be held in Mortensen Hall in The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts. Seating will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Program and artists are subject to change.

The Hartford Symphony Orchestra gratefully acknowledges the City of Hartford and the Richard P. Garmany Fund at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving for their support of this concert. Hartford Symphony's Picnic in the Park is sponsored by Bank of America; Federman, Lally & Remis LLC; The Burton and Phyllis Hoffman Foundation; KPMG; Lincoln Financial Group; Seabury Retirement Community; TD Bank; and United Technologies Corporation. The Hartford Symphony Orchestra's 2011-2012 season is sponsored by Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center. The Hartford Symphony Orchestra receives major support from the Greater Hartford Arts Council, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, and the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism.

PHOTOS attached of HSO Music Director Carolyn Kuan standing on the Bandshell at Bushnell Park; and Carolyn Kuan with Mayor Pedra Segarra (photo credit: Steven Laschever). To request guest artist photos, please contact kbonner@hartfordsymphony.org.

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